

Water Resources Council

§ 707.5

(RBC's) and other entities (such as interagency committees) preparing studies and plans for WRC review and transmittal to the President. Although Title III State planning grants do not normally require environmental assessments or statements (§ 707.8 (a)(3)), the WRC will encourage States receiving grants to give appropriate consideration to the environmental effects of their proposed actions and to incorporate suitable environmental conditions, to the extent permitted by State law. The preamble to the WRC Title III guidelines will reflect this policy.

§ 707.4 Definitions.

(a) *Responsible Federal Official (RFO)*. The "Responsible Federal Official (RFO)" is the official of the Federal Government designated by this rule who shall be responsible for the implementation of NEPA, including regulations issued by the CEQ (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508) and the rule. Of particular importance, the RFO determines the need for an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with § 707.8 (a)(2) and (b), and if an EIS is required, files the draft and final EIS, makes the Record of Decision and assures appropriate public involvement in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.6. The Chairman of the RBC's are the RFO's for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the provisions of NEPA and the P&S for those activities which are funded in whole or in part through the WRC and carried out by the RBC's, such as framework studies, special studies, comprehensive coordinated joint plans, regional or river basin (Level B) plans and revisions thereof. The Chairman of the WRC, or his designee, is the RFO for complying with the provisions of NEPA and the P&S for those framework studies, regional or river basin plans, comprehensive coordinated joint plans, and special studies which are funded by the WRC and carried out by WRC interagency committees and WRC coordinating committees; principles, standards and procedures for planning water and related land resources; rules and regulations of the WRC, and other activities of the WRC.

(b) *Major Federal Action*. "Major Federal action" as defined in the CEQ NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1508.18) includes actions with effects that may be major and which are potentially subject to Federal control and responsibility. Such actions include WRC interagency committee, and WRC coordinating committee adoption, approval or submittal of plans for water and related land resources. For the purpose of this rule, RBC adoption, approval or submittal of a plan for water and related land resources is considered a major Federal action by virtue of the scope and significant environmental consequences of such actions, the participation of Federal officials in these RBC actions, and the WRC requirements for Federal agency consistency with approved regional water resource management plans (WRC Policy Statement No. 4—The Utilization of Comprehensive Regional Water Resource Management Plans).

§ 707.5 Policy.

(a) *General*. The WRC and the RBC's administer certain programs that must comply with both NEPA and the P&S. Generally, the environmental analysis done during the development of the Environmental Quality (EQ) account under the P&S partially overlaps the analysis required in an EIS, presenting an opportunity for integration. The requirements of NEPA and the P&S will be carried out by integrating the two processes to the fullest extent practicable and by combining to the fullest extent practicable the Environmental Assessment or, when required, Environmental Impact Statement, with each study or plan into a single document that will comply fully with the requirements of both processes, as provided by the CEQ NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1502.10 and 1506.4).

(b) *Public participation*. For each environmental assessment and impact statement, the appropriate RFO will establish a specific program and schedule for public participation of all interested parties in the NEPA process, and shall otherwise provide for public involvement in accordance with the CEQ NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

(c) *Environmental Impact Statements*. Environmental Impact Statements